



### Resilience & Burnout

 McFadden, P, Campbell, A., & Taylor, B. (2015). Resilience and burnout in child protection social work: Individual and organizational themes from a systematic literature review. *British Journal of Social Work*, 45(5), 1546-1563.

#### WHAT ARE THESE RESOURCES?

This journal article highlights retention and turnover issues in child welfare through a comprehensive literature review of 65 articles focusing on research addressing individual and organizational factors related to burnout and resilience in the child welfare workforce.

#### WHAT ARE THE CRITICAL FINDINGS?

The authors reviewed research findings on individual and organizational themes affecting staff working in child welfare and their level of resilience, including the following:

-  Individual themes included personal history of maltreatment; training and preparation for child welfare; coping; secondary traumatic stress; compassion fatigue; and compassion satisfaction.
-  Organizational themes included workload; social support and supervision; organizational culture and climate; organizational and professional commitment; and job satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

The literature review sought to bring together a range of available research findings on resilience and burnout in child protection social work, and highlighted the following:

Individual & Organizational Items Impacting Resilience & Retention

Personal History of Maltreatment	Preparation & Training	Coping	Commitment	Organizational Environment & Leadership	Workload
It is difficult to determine if history of personal trauma enhances or reduces resilience, but personal history is a significant positive motivator to entering a caring profession	Participation in funded social work education programs predicted increased retention, and training and transfer of learning activities supported worker sense of competence and retention	Social workers achieved job satisfaction and lower levels of burnout by using a number of coping strategies, such as keeping expectations realistic, problem-solving, finding support from peers, using supervision, maintaining an active life outside work, and debriefing from trauma	Commitment to child welfare mission and supervisor has been shown to impact job satisfaction and whether an employee stays or leaves the profession	Supervisory support, level of trust and support between colleagues and adequate resources are highly correlated with job satisfaction, and workers' positive perception of teamwork decreased their intentions to leave, as did strong management and leadership	Workers perceive challenging working conditions to indicate that their welfare is not important to their employer, which in turn results in a lack of organizational commitment and high rates of attrition.

#### WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR WORK?

There is no single factor that impacts or predicts resilience and retention, but there is a cluster of research findings that can inform a comprehensive approach to workforce development. A variety of issues relevant to the recruitment and retention of staff must be attended to in order to help the child welfare workforce achieve longevity and stability.